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School Committee Minutes 01/25/2011

Approved by the Arlington School Committee April 12, 2011

*The Arlington School Committee
Regular School Committee Meeting
Tuesday, January 25, 2011
7:30 p.m.*

Meeting to be held in the School Committee Room – Sixth Floor
Arlington High School
869 Massachusetts Avenue, Arlington, MA 02476

Present: Mr. Joseph Curro, Chair, Ms. Leba Heigham, Vice Chair, Ms. Cindy Starks, Secretary, Mr. Thielman, Mr. Joseph Curran, Dr. Kirsii Allison-Ampe and Mr. Judson Pierce.

Dr. Kathleen Bodie, Superintendent, Ms. Diane Johnson, Chief Financial Officer, Ms. Linda Hansen, AEA Representative, Student Representatives Ms. Maggie Griesmer and Ms. Karen Fitzgerald, Administrative Assistant.

Absent: Joe Curran Dr. Wallis Raemer, Assistant Superintendent, Mr. Mark Ryder Director of Special Education, Steve Pereira, AAA Representative

Ms. Maggie Griesmer exited the meeting at 9:08 p.m.

Ms. Johnson exited the meeting at 9:16 p.m. and returned at 9:25 p.m.

Reflection, Remembrance and Recognition

Mr. Curro read a quote from an educational scholar and Remembrance was in honor of the husband of high school teacher Ms. Carol Dube, passed away and services will be held on February 5. A brief moment of silence was held. Mr. Curro's recognitiontonight was for the artwork by the Blue Ribbon Stratton Elementary School students.

Mr. Curro welcomed the advisors of the Ottoson Middle School Robotics Teams: Mr. Gary Blanchette, Ms. Julie McDaniels, and Ms. Allison Oropolla and each of their teams. The middle schools students presented and explained their Lego Mindstorms robot project. The team demonstrated and answered questions regarding their robot design. The teams explored/researched actual problems that today's scientists and engineers are trying to solve. Teamwork is a core value where the students learn and gain goals to help one another. They shared their competition experiences and explained that if something goes wrong they needed to identify it, find a solution and present the solution. The teams qualified to move on to the state competition. It was noted that our high school team qualifeid for states and came in fourth place.

Public Participation (Per File BEDH, Arlington School Committee Policy Manual)

- Speakers will be allowed three (3) minutes to present their material.
- Issues requiring extensive discussion may be deferred to a future meeting with a scheduled agenda item.
- All remarks will be addressed through the chairperson of the meeting.

None

Fiscal Year 2012 Budget Discussion

Mr. Tim Ruggere, Ottoson Middle School Principal, first announced the students who won the Boston Globe scholastic writing award for 2011 and said the award ceremony will be held in March. Mr. Ruggere said many students qualified for the district music competition too. Mr. Ruggere said even with all the budget cuts, students continue to impress him.

Mr. Ruggere explained the budget impacts to the Ottoson and how he will have to eliminate the cluster model, increase class sizes to average 35 students, eliminate special classes, and said the cuts will change the student learning experiences as well as have a negative impact on student social emotional needs.

Dr. Bodie said she still holds out hope that the budget numbers could change and knows that the cuts will be across all schools but exactly what those positions would be needs to be identified.

Mr. Pierce asked Dr. Bodie to inform all staff as soon as possible of any staff reductions. Mr. Thielman said he would like to maintain and support all staff, therefore he said he would support an override.

Ms. Heigham spoke about the risk with the state due to so many directed studies and asked if Mr. Ruggere consults with Mr. Skidmore around scheduling. Mr. Ruggere replied that he does and would continue to do so. Ms. Heigham informed everyone about the Ottoson Middle School Parent Forum to be held on Thursday, February 3, 2011 at the media center. Ms. Heigham explained about the three Parent Forums and the Public Hearing on the FY 12 Budget.

Mr. Curro asked Mr. Ruggere about space issues next year and if online courses were discussed. Mr. Ruggere replied that he has thought of each of these and many other ideas that teachers have brought to his attention.

Mr. Thielman moved to table everything up until the Policy and Procedures agenda item, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 6-0

Policies and Procedures Subcommittee

Mr. Pierce presented Policies: BE School Committee Meetings and BEA Regular School Committee Meetings for a second reading. The changes included moving the start time from 7:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. for all regular, special, and public hearings. The regular meetings shall be changed from being held on the second and fourth Tuesday to the second and fourth Thursdays of each month except July and August. Meetings will adjourn by 10 p.m. When the second or fourth Thursday falls on a legal or religious holiday, or in a school vacation, the regular meeting shall be held on a date and at a time voted by the Committee. These changes will take effect at the start of the 2011–2012 school year.

Mr. Thielman moved to approve the Second Reading: BE - School Committee Meetings, BEA - Regular School Committee Meetings changes to take effect the start of 2011-2012 school year, seconded by Ms. Heigham

Voted: 6-0

Mr. Pierce said at the last Policies and Procedures meeting the subcommittee spoke to review CBI - Evaluation Of The Superintendent and CBI-E - Superintendent Evaluation. Mr. Curro said Attorney Liz Valerio said the policies need to change due to Open Meeting Law and that it is important for committee members to complete the evaluation before change over with this committee and give the subcommittee time to work with Town Council to review the policies.

Ms. Starks moved to authorize the Policies and Procedures Subcommittee to work directly with Town Counsel and School Committee labor counsel to make appropriate revisions to file CBI Evaluation of the Superintendent and File CBI-E, Superintendent Evaluation, with a goal toward ultimate adoption of any revisions by March 8, 2011.

Voted: 6-0

Mr. Pierce said he will also review Policy KF Community Use of School Facilities and discuss who hears the waivers and approves them.

Consent Agenda - All items listed with an asterisk (*) are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless a member of the committee so request, in which event the item will be considered in its normal sequence.

- Approval of Warrant # 11096 Total Warrant Amount \$ 364,083.94 dated January 11, 2011

- Approval of School Committee Minutes: ~December 14, 2010

**Ms. Starks moved to approved the Consent Agenda, Approval of Warrant # 11096 Total Warrant Amount \$ 364,083.94 dated January 11, 2011 and Approval of School Committee Minutes: ~December 14, 2010 seconded by Ms. Heigham.
Voted: 6-0**

Secretary's Report

Ms. Starks reported on all the following correspondence received:

- email to Mr. Ryder about the budget cuts for FY12 and how they will impact the inclusion program at Peirce
- copy of an editorial submitted to the Belmont paper about teacher salaries in comparable districts (which included Arlington)
- email thanking us for having AEA representation at our meetings
- approved copies of the minutes of school committee meetings held on 11/9/2010, 11/15/2010, and 11/23/2010
- draft copy of the minutes of the school committee meeting held on 12/14/2010
- MASC letter requesting school committee chairs and superintendents to nominate people for awards that they present each year in the following categories: friends of public education, community leader for public education, and community partner for public education
- letter from MASC alerting us of an upcoming webinar (that has unfortunately already happened on 1/19) that addressed how school districts can prepare for the new common standards and assessments
- an invitation to Maria Romano's campaign kick-off for Selectman
- copy of the Brackett school newsletter dated 1/18/2011
- copy of the Ponder report dated January 2011
- invitation to an Evening of Song at Lowe Auditorium on Weds. Feb. 2, 2011 at 7pm

Superintendent's Report

Dr. Bodie congratulated the Ottoson Middle School Robotics Teams, and the AHS Robotics Team. Dr. Bodie also sends congratulations to Cameron Perron for Recognition of Outstanding Achievement at the Annual MLK Birthday Observance on January 17.

Cam Perron was recognized for his research in finding and reconnecting many players in the Negro Baseball League. From the MLK booklet, "He is now an expert on verifying players' time in the league so they can qualify for a pension.

Dr. Bodie said the Elementary Enrichment After-School Program is a new APS After-School Enrichment Program and will begin the week of March 7th. The classes for this pilot program will meet once per week for 6-8 weeks in each elementary school (except for Hardy which runs its own enrichment program) for students in grades 1-5 immediately after school (2:30). Dr. Bodie congratulated the AHS Music Technology Students for the January 12 Concert.

Dr. Bodie said given the strong possibility of additional snow days, at some point the School Committee may need to start talking about what other options exist to make up the days.

Dr. Allison Ampe asked if Dr. Bodie could control the timing of the phone calls to elementary parents, saying 5:15 a.m. was too early.

Ms. Heigham prefers to be notified by 5:55 a.m. and asked to expand the calls to students cell phones and asked Dr. Bodie about the dangerous sidewalks close to schools.

**Ms. Heigham moved to remove from the table all items that were tabled, seconded by Ms. Starks.
Voted: 6-0**

Robbins Farm Garden Educational Initiatives

Mr. Alan Jones and Ms. Elisabeth Carr-Jones wanted to make the School Committee members aware of the educational work they are doing at the Robbins Farm Garden and would like to do more outreach to students, and hoped to somehow include this project into the Science curriculum.

Ms. Starks moved to support in principle the educational initiatives of the Robbins Farm Garden and to commend these for further study by the District Accountability/Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment Subcommittee and such District professionals as deemed appropriate by the Superintendent and the Assistant

Superintendent for curriculum and Instruction, seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 6-0

Recess

Mr. Thielman moved to table the Recess, seconded by Mr. Pierce.

Voted: 6-0

Roundtable

Mr. Pierce said he had attended the coffee sponsored by the Superintendent's Diversity Advisory Committee and will meet again March 8 and invited everyone to attend and discuss how to attract qualified staff. Dr. Bodie said we will be hosting the next Diversity Minority Fair on March 23, 2011.

Dr. Allison-Ampe attended the high school Parent Forum and encourages everyone to attend the Public Forum on the budget to be held on February 15, 2011.

Mr. Thielman said the District Accountability/Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Subcommittee met and discussed the Technology Plan and said they would like to present this plan to the full School Committee on March 8, 2011. Mr. Thielman said the Human Resource function will be included in the Warrant Articles. The Thompson Building Committee will meet in the Superintendent's office on Wednesday.

Ms. Heigham reminded everyone of the middle school Parent Forum, February 3, 2011 in the media center of the Ottoson Middle School.

Ms. Heigham moved that the District Accountability, Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment Subcommittee review the MASBO Report for accountability and follow through with the recommendations, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Dr. Allison-Ampe thinks this should be the Budget Subcommittee. Mr. Curro said the Executive Subcommittee should review the MASBO Report. Ms. Starks agrees with Mr. Curro that it should be the Executive Subcommittee.

Ms. Heigham withdrew her motion.

Ms. Heigham moved to have the Executive Subcommittee review the MASBO grid to determine oversight of the recommendations, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Voted: 6-0

Mr. Curro sent out to the committee recommendations regarding the agenda and would like to have it finalized possibly at the close of business on the Thursday before a meeting. Mr. Curro informed the committee that the Athletic Advisory Committee is asking for support on Funding Requests to the Town of Arlington Community Development Block Grant in the amount of \$50,000 and that they would like to present at the next meeting.

Ms. Starks suggested she would contact someone in the town to have someone from the School Committee included in the discussion of precincts.

Executive Session

Ms. Heigham moved to enter Executive Session at 9:40 p.m. to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation when an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigation position of the committee. To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel, or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel only to exit for the purposes for adjournment, seconded by Ms. Starks.

Roll Call: Mr. Pierce Yes, Dr. Allison-Ampe Yes, Mr. Thielman Yes, Ms. Starks Yes, Ms. Heigham Yes, Mr. Curro Yes

Voted: 6-0

Adjournment

Ms. Starks moved to exit out of Executive Session at 10:00 p.m. seconded by Ms. Heigham.

Voted: 6-0

Respectfully Subcommittee by
Karen M. Fitzgerald
Administrative Assistant
Arlington School Committee/cs